

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 04047 021913Z

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SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PEZMAZOGLOU-CHANGE IN PARLIAMENT
TIMETABLE

1. JOHN PEZMAZOGLOU IS THE SECOND MOST PROMINENT AND POLITICALLY INFLUENTIAL PERSONALITY (AFTER GEORGE MAVROS) IN THE MAJOR OPPOSITION PARTY-CENTER UNION-NEW FORCES--IN THE PARLIAMENT. HE WAS AN OUTSPOKEN AND TIRELESS CRITIC OF THE JUNTA DURING THE PERIOD OF THE DICTATORSHIP AND SERVED AS MINISTER OF FINANCE IN THE FIRST CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT PRIOR TO LAST NOVEMBER'S NATIONAL ELECTIONS. HE IS OFTEN BRILLIANT AND ALWAYS ARTICULATE, AND HE HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST VOCAL AND SUCCESSFUL CRITICS OF US POLICY TOWARDS GREECE DURING THE PERIOD OF THE DOLONELS AND OF OUR POLICY AND ACTIONS DURING LAST SUMMER'S CRISIS OVER CYPRUS.

2. PEZMAZOGLOU AND I HAVE HAD A KIND OF RUNNING DIALOGUE FOR SOME MONTHS NOW AND TODAY HAD A LONG SCHEDULED PRIVATE LUNCH TOGETHER. (PEZMAZOGLOU ALSO ATTENDED A RECEPTION AT OUR RESIDENCE LAST FRIDAY EVENING--ALONG WITH NINETEEN OTHER GREEK PARLIAMENTARIANS--IN HONOR OF THE VISITING AMERICAN CODEL HEADED BY SENATOR HRUSKA AND REPRESENTATIVE LANDRUM. PEZMAZOGLOU SAID IT WAS THE FIRST TIME HE HAD BEEN IN THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IN OVER SEVEN YEARS--AS DID SEVERAL OTHER GREEK PARLIAMENTARIANS INCLUDING DIONYSSIOS

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 04047 021913Z

LIVANOS, WHO WAS LAST THERE ON THE NIGHT OF APRIL 21, 1967,

WHEN HE INFORMED THEN AMB TALBOT ABOUT THE COUP AGAINST HIS UNCLE.) PEZMAZOGLOU AND I WENT OVER A FULL RANGE OF ISSUES AFFECTING US-GREEK RELATIONS AND HE PERSISTED IN HIS ATTACKS ON OUR POLICY DURING THE DICTATORSHIP AND CONCERNING CYPRUS. WE THRASHED THE ARGUMENTS OUT ONE BY ONE OVER A PERIOD OF ALMOST THREE HOURS, AND WHILE FROM MY POINT OF VIEW IT WAS A HEAVY INVESTMENT OF TIME, I FELT IT WAS WORTH IT.

3. THE ONLY THING REALLY NEW OR WORTH REPORTING THAT CAME OUT OF OUR MEETING--OTHER THAN THE FACT IT TOOK PLACE--WERE HIS COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEWLY REVISED PARLIAMENTARY TIME-TABLE. PEZMAZOGLOU SAID THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE CONSTITUTION WOULD BE VOTED BY THIS WEEKEND OR BY EARLY NEXT WEEK AT THE LATEST, FOLLOWING WHICH THERE WOULD BE A FIFTEEN-TWENTY DAY HIATUS FOR LEGAL AND LANGUAGE VERIFICATION REASONS. THEN, ABOUT THE END OF JUNE OR IN EARLY JULY, THE PARLIAMENT WOULD VOTE ON THE NEW PRESIDENT OF GREECE. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTIONING, PEZMAZOGLOU SAID THAT ALL INDICATIONS CONTINUED TO BE THAT CARAMANLIS HAD NOT YET MADE UP HIS MIND WHETHER OR NOT TO SEEK THE PRESIDENCY FOR HIMSELF. PEZMAZOGLOU THOUGHT THAT CARAMANLIS MIGHT WELL WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE BEFORE MAKING HIS INTENTIONS KNOWN--AFTER ALL, HE SAID, STASSINOPOULOS NAME WAS NOT PUT FORWARD BY CARAMANLIS TO BE PRESIDENT OF GREECE UNTIL THE NIGHT BEFORE THE ELECTION, AND THIS WAS CARAMANLIS STYLE. FOLLOWING THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT IN EARLY JULY OR BY MID JULY AT THE LATEST, THE PARLIAMENT WOULD BREAK FOR ITS SUMMER RECESS (AS OPPOSED TO EARLY OR MID-JUNE, AS MAVROS HAD TOLD ME RECENTLY).
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